

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Essilor

#### Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension Inc

#### Essilor Industries Zooms In On Lean Transformation

##### Client Profile:

Essilor Industries, located in Ponce, Puerto Rico, manufactures lenses and has the highest market share in its industry. The company is a subsidiary of Essilor International, a multinational company headquartered in France. Essilor has been in Puerto Rico since 1986, and presently employs 296 people.

##### Situation:

Essilor Industries' management was aware that the company still needed to pursue new levels of performance and cost reduction to be more competitive and attractive for future product introduction. After attending a lean manufacturing workshop sponsored by Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension, Inc. (PRiMEX), a NIST MEP network affiliate, company management asked PRiMEX to help them develop a lean transformation strategy.

##### Solution:

PRiMEX began with an education and implementation phase. PRiMEX coordinated several special training events for Essilor Industries' workforce. Every member of the office and production staff participated in six lean simulation workshops. Through this training, employees gained the skills necessary to identify improvement opportunities in all company areas. Essilor's executives selected 39 action items as key priority activities to be included in the next phases of lean implementation.

After leading basic lean training, PRiMEX conducted 5S kaizen blitzes for three different areas. Over 61 employees participated in the identification of process delays and housekeeping needs. The foundation for continuous improvement was now set, and Essilor employees made several changes that led to dramatic process improvements in these areas.

The company is now applying its lean skills to the packaging and material handling activities. This gradual process transformation has allowed a move from batch processing to one piece flow, and from double handling in the packaging process to a single step to the final shipping area. This simple change cut overall freight costs to further improve customer satisfaction.

##### Results:

Trained 296 employees in lean manufacturing concepts.

Reduced work-in-process from three days to four hours (a 20-hour reduction).

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Eliminated finished goods inventory to reclaim 7 production days.  
Reduced the unit cost of manufacturing by 4 percent.  
Improved quality yields by over 4 percent.  
Reduced required manufacturing space by approximately 10,000 square feet (10 percent of available space) to create space for a new product.

### **Testimonial:**

"[Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension, Inc. taught us that] the level of accomplishments through lean manufacturing techniques can be measured by the time it takes to manufacture a product. This unit of measure has allowed our workforce to address opportunities, measure accomplishments, and communicate positive results."

Daniel Bujadinovic, General Manager